

# BALENA

REVOLUTIONARY LEFTIST PUBLICATION OF THE BARRICAADA COLLECTIVE





**“La Barricada Cierra la Calle, Pero Abre el Camino”****BARRICADA COLLECTIVE STATEMENT****TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Barricada is a non-partisan, non-hierarchical collective within the radical leftist spectrum with the principle aim of producing and distributing revolutionary propaganda and news.

We work to build class-consciousness through the distribution of radical left wing culture and ideas as an alternative to the state and the capitalist system. To this end we distribute pamphlets, flyers, newsletters, and other forms of propaganda, as well as participating in initiatives which are in line with our general ideas and beliefs.

The Barricada collective opposes electoral politics, the party system, and representative democracy, because we see them as cheapening true democracy and serving to take power and initiative away from the hands of people. We are also opposed to reformist alternatives aimed at making superficial changes to what we view as an inherently flawed system.

We are opposed to nationalism and other artificial divisions of the working class. However, we are also anti-imperialists and as such support oppressed peoples in their struggles of national liberation providing that they maintain a revolutionary leftist character. At the same time we bear in mind that this is not our ideal situation, as our wish is not to see the emergence of more states and borders but instead a stateless, classless society based on the principals of mutual aid, direct democracy, freely federated community structures, and workers self-management.

To this end we justify and encourage the pursuit of the class war, including but not limited to, direct action, workplace sabotage, property damage, mass confrontation, and civil disobedience. We believe that the issue of revolutionary violence should be viewed from a tactical standpoint rather than an ideological one. This said, we believe that the creation of a “culture of resistance,” where the state and all other enemies of the working class are at no time safe, is an essential aspect of any social movement, serving to empower people as well as creating an atmosphere ideal for class warfare.

**SUBSCRIBE TO BARRICADA**

I have enclosed \$10 for 6 issues (USA and Canada)

I have enclosed \_\_\_ for a supporters subscription

I have enclosed 15\$ for a subscription in Western Europe (Money Orders are best, checks with pay to the order of blanks next, or well concealed cash at your own risk)

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Please feel free to donate all articles, comments, letters\* or other sorts of contributions.

**Note:** We will print all letters provided we do not find them to be particularly offensive for the obvious reasons (sexist, racist, homophobic, etc.) or simply downright not worthy of space.

The Barricada website will be up and running within the next few weeks. Look for it at ...

**www.barricada.org**

The Barricada Collective runs a low-traffic, moderated, e-mail list to inform its readers about activities of the collective, initiatives we support, and upcoming mobilizations. If you wish to subscribe please email us at **barricadacollective@hotmail.com** and let us know.







## REPRESSION IN MALMO

Swedish police began preparing for the upcoming European Union summit in Gothenburg by violently detaining over 200 people in a march in Malmo on April 20th.

The reason for the surrounding of the "autonomist" section of the demonstration given by the police was that a fire extinguisher set off by somebody in the contingent was responsible for spooking a horse.

As a result of this police surrounded the contingent, proceeding to a series of very violent arrests, which included knees to the neck and back and quite a few unnecessary baton swings.

Several hundred policemen were bussed from Gothenburg to Malmo for the demonstration of approximately 1000 people, and the chief of police admitted that they were using it as a rehearsal for the June summit.

## PUERTO RICO RESISTS BOMBINGS

Over 50 people have been arrested on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques after US military resumed war games in the area.

Demonstrators have repeatedly succeeded in postponing and canceling exercises by sneaking into the range of fire.

There have also been clashes between demonstrators and military police.

As the picture below illustrates, Quebec was not the only place where the fences of the ruling class were being attacked.

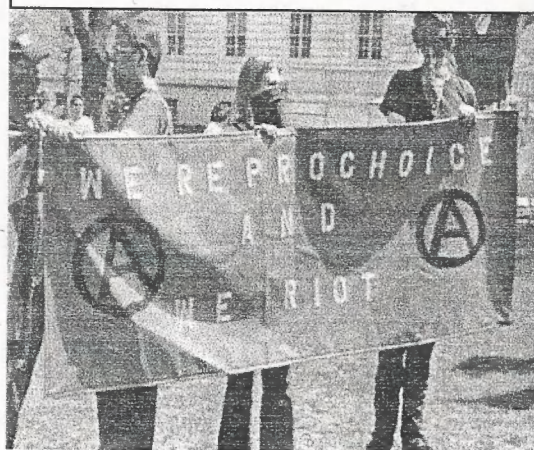


## THOUSANDS IN DC FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Several thousand people converged on Washington DC on Sunday, April 22nd to attend the March for Women's Lives and resist George Bush's attacks on abortion rights.

Despite being the same weekend as the mass mobilization in Quebec, the march still included a 50 person strong black bloc, which was led by the large Class War banner from the inauguration black bloc and a banner reading "We're Pro-Choice, and We Riot."

The latter attracted the attention of some of the local police who warned those holding it that if for any reason things got "out of hand" they would be charged with inciting a riot.



## THE AMERICAS AGAINST THE FTAA

Quebec was certainly not the only city to see massive demonstrations against the FTAA and against capitalism in general during the month of April.

During the first week of April, several demonstrations, culminating in a 10 thousand strong march on the Sheraton hotel, took place in Buenos Aires. The last of these ended in violent confrontations between leftist groups hurling molotov cocktails and police defending the Summit of the Americas pre-meeting inside the Sheraton Hotel.

In addition to this, several hundred people demonstrated on the weekend of April 20th in Detroit and Buffalo in solidarity with the Quebec mobilization.

A larger march of several thousand also took place in Washington state, and a one thousand strong march was carried out at the US/Mexico border near San Diego.

Smaller demonstrations and actions also took place all over North America.

## SOME COMMENTS FROM THE BARRICADA COLLECTIVE

As you may have noticed, it was finally decided not to postpone the release of this issue until after Mayday in order to cover Mayday events around the world.

This decision was based primarily on the fact that given our very weak economic condition we felt it important to have our new issue on sale by May 1.

Speaking of our economic condition, we would like to thank all the people who responded to our plea for economic aide last month. Particularly we would like to thank ARA Columbus, Left Bank Books, and some people in Washington DC. Our situation is still very much turbulent, so please, if you can, help us out.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to inform our readers and subscribers that the June issue will be our last until September. This is due to the fact that a large part of the collective has commitments during the summer which will make publishing the magazine impossible. However, as compensation, the September issue will be double in size and include full coverage of all the summer mobilizations, as well as an extensive commentary section.







# THE BLACK BLOC VISITS QUEBEC



## THE CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF A PARTICIPANT

In the aftermath of the Quebec mobilization, as with any large-scale mobilization, pictures, personal accounts, and terribly poorly written corporate media stories abound. However, due to the (very positive) fact that there were so many people in the streets of Quebec, so many different points of conflict, and such firmness on the part of the black bloc regarding photographs, accounts and/or pictures of the black bloc's activities are more or less limited to a couple of the larger battles of the weekend, primarily the first perimeter breach and Saturday afternoon's hours long battle on the highway.

The following, while by no means \*the\* definitive account of the Quebec City black bloc, is one attempt to shed as much light on the activities of the black bloc in Quebec as we can, dispel some of the rumors regarding it, deal with some of the controversies that have arisen since, and make some statements regarding common criticisms of the black bloc which we feel where to a large extent proven incorrect by the Quebec events.

To be clear, we are obviously well aware that the black bloc represented only one of the many groups and individuals who put themselves on the line in Quebec and contributed to making it the success that it was. The fact that our coverage is focused very much on the black bloc is not meant to mean anything beyond that we are acknowledging that black bloc coverage has been scarce, that we are limited in regards to how much space we can use for Quebec coverage, and that, to be perfectly honest, we know what most interests our readers.

For the sake of clarity we have chosen to divide our report on the Quebec City black bloc into two sections. The first is a chronological account of the weekend's events, and the second an analysis, congratulation, and criticism section.

### The Barricada Collective

The first major event of the CLAC/CASA anti-capitalist mobilization in Quebec City was the nighttime march of Thursday the 19th. Even though the march was intended to be, and was, peaceful and non-confrontational many people stayed away, fearing a repeat of the pre-emptive mass arrests that were seen in Washington DC last April. Despite this the march quickly

swelled to at least two thousand strong.

Needless to say, the demonstration went off without any incidents of note. It did, however, provide a great opportunity for some of the anarchists present to do some much needed public relations work with the Quebec locals by going door to door along the march route distributing NEFAC's newly released 4-page newspaper. Yet, despite the festive tone of the march, which was sprinkled with groups of black bloc folks in masks, there was a general sense of what was to come, particularly illustrated by the dozens of media vultures jumping on any possible image that involved people in masks or fire.

The first major rendezvous of the weekend was Friday the 20th at noon at Laval University. This was to be the starting point of the CLAC/CASA demonstration heading towards the "green" street party zone in the St. Jean-Baptiste neighborhood and the perimeter. A quick look around the area revealed that militants, activists, and ordinary folks from all walks of lives, all ages, and all areas of the revolutionary anti-capitalist political spectrum had assembled. Marxist-Leninists, Maoists, anarchists, local revolutionary separatists, Red and Anarchist SkinHeads, trade unionists, and any others one could think of had all turned out to oppose the Summit of the Americas.

A statement released by the Autonomous Organizing Collective of Anti-Authoritarians from the Midwest, Northeast, Montreal, and Quebec had called on people to look for the unfurling of a banner reading "Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Offensive" as the signal for the black bloc to begin assembling. However, as often happens with black blocs, different affinity groups that knew each other naturally began drifting towards each other. Eventually, the RACO banner did appear, despite the march not being in motion yet, but evidently the lack of a noticeable police presence in the area made people decide that it was safe to begin unloading.

The sight that followed was probably a first (but certainly hopefully not a last) among North American black blocs. People began discreetly dropping bags full of helmets, batons, and hockey pucks for people to take. A quick glance revealed approximately 30 or 40 helmets, around 60

batons, and well over 100 hockey pucks. All this was in addition to the padding, bolt cutters, ropes, gas masks, shields, and whatever else that different affinity groups had brought for themselves. The end result was probably the best-accessorized black bloc North America has ever seen.

At approximately 1 p.m. the almost two hour long march to the perimeter began. The black bloc, which now numbered about 300 people (although by the time it arrived at the perimeter it had swelled to at least 500) out of a total of at least five thousand, was led by the RACO banner and a red and black banner made of linoleum, to defend against water cannon attacks, which read "Capitalism Cannot be Reformed" in both English and French.

Most of the course of the demonstration was through residential areas, and at all times police presence was minimal, restricting itself to traffic cops and private security guards for the odd store or office building. Besides the inevitable re-decoration of the march route with political slogans only two incidents of note occurred during the march to the perimeter. The first, which is still unclear, involved some people and a St. Foye (the neighborhood Laval University is located in) police officer who was directing traffic. The most plausible account of what happened states that somebody decided that, since the policeman was alone, it would not be much of a problem to slash the tires of the squad car. Apparently, the policeman, infuriated, decided to jump out of the car and arrest the tire slasher. At this point several people reacted to perform an unarrest. According to the policeman's version of the events, one person pushed him back with a baton and another struck him in the face with a metal bar, causing the officer to bleed profusely. At this point the officer managed to pull out his gun, and how a further escalation of the conflict was avoided nobody seems to know as of yet. This incident would become very important as throughout the weekend police attempted to arrest people and charge them with "attempted murder" as a result of this incident (for more information see the political prisoners section).

As the march neared the perimeter the black bloc passed in front of a Shell gas station. Needless to say, the station was thoroughly re-decorated with ELF slogans



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and several hockey pucks found their way through the windows.

Finally, after a long and hot march, the bloc arrived at the perimeter. About half a block from it everybody stopped to tighten up and do some last minute organizing. People with shields and gas masks made their way to the front, ropes were distributed, and a mattress was at the front for protection as well. As the bloc got closer and closer to the perimeter several media vehicles were repaid for their misinformation and fear-mongering. However, once arrived at the fence people's attention was focused solely on the "Wall of Shame." What followed has been seen on television and in newspapers over and over, but it is fair to say that none of the mainstream media accounts even come near to conveying the fury and force with which the bloc, and many other people who joined in, tore down the fence on Rene-Levesque boulevard. People seemed quite surprised by the fact that the police presence was so close to minimal at the perimeter, and most importantly, that they seemed to be watching in awe as the fence came closer and closer to collapsing.

After not more than five minutes of rocking the fence back and forth it came down with a thud...and a resounding cheer from the crowd around. As soon as the first section of the fence was toppled, several others followed, eventually creating a breach of about 150 feet. As the opening widened, more and more black blocbers and other revolutionaries began pouring through. Unfortunately, despite the huge opening, not nearly enough people for any sort of concerted charge at the still thin police lines came through. At most, approximately 100 people went over the fallen fence. This resulted in several hand to hand, or baton to baton, battles with police, and the inevitable start of the repression.

It was at this point that the tear gas began flying, not to stop for nearly 48 hours. However, because people had come well prepared, each canister of tear gas was returned to the police lines along with a hail of rocks, hockey pucks, and golf balls, not to mention the occasional molotov cocktail. The conviction and courage when faced with police and their arsenal of repression that the people at the front lines in Quebec displayed was beyond anything this writer has ever seen at a demonstration in North America. Eventually however, after over one hour of pitched battle, people began retreating.

During the retreat several more media vehicles were attacked. However, at this point the water cannons made their entrance from the rear. Again, rather than

being intimidated by them, people ran towards them, putting sticks inside the cannon, smashing the driver's side windows, and forcing them to beat a hasty retreat.

The rest of Friday afternoon was essentially one long series of battles back and forth, with police firing gas and rubber bullets, while people fought back with anything that was at hand. At one point a police car sped through the crowd at a high speed, almost flipping over while swerving to avoid the hail of rocks that greeted it.

As is customary in Quebec, police pushed people into the St. Jean-Baptiste neighborhood, but this evidently backfired as residents, not put off by the police and media scare tactics, took in activists (yes, even those in the black bloc), gave people water, cheered them on, and in many cases even took to the streets to join the fight.

Unfortunately, for some reason or another, the black bloc came apart quite quickly on Friday after the first battle, and for the rest of the day there really was no organized black bloc. However, it turned out to not be too much of an issue, as there were so many people willing to resist the police that one felt at home almost anywhere.

Important to note is that at some point during the day a group of people encountered an unoccupied police vehicle and proceeded to break it's windows, in the process taking several documents with them. These documents, which included telephone numbers of Quebec police officers, riot police strategy, and intelligence on CLAC/CASA and other groups, were later made public. It is suspected that the posting of these documents is the reason why FBI agents visited the Seattle Independent Media Center a few days after the incident.

As night neared many people began to assemble under the highway overpass on Cote D'Abraham, and this was to be the next main hotspot of battle for the day. Thousands of people fought the police until well into the night. The fighting finally subsided around 2 or 3 a. m. as people retreated to gather strength for what would be, at least for the black bloc, a much busier day on Saturday.

Saturday was the day of the large union march which, depending on who one chooses to believe, drew anywhere between 30 and 50 thousand people. It had been announced that a CLAC/CASA contingent and an anarchist contingent would be in the march, but would

break away at a certain point and head once more to the perimeter.

At about 2 p.m. a group of approximately 100 black blocbers had assembled to the side of the union march. After a bit of standing around and rumors of militant unionists attacking the fence at different points, tempting people to head towards the perimeter prematurely, the bloc eventually got moving. Again, as it advanced, the bloc rapidly swelled in size, growing to at least 300 strong. A bank on the march route had it's windows smashed, and at one point the bloc stopped as several people ran down a side street, disappearing around a corner. About one minute later they returned, only now there was several more of them and they were carrying a dumpster full of wooden sticks.

Several blocks further down the black bloc, followed by many others, split from the union march and began heading up the hill and towards the perimeter, armed with batons, masks, moveable wooden barricades, a dumpster, and a vast array of other materials.

Eventually the black bloc arrived at Rue St. Jean in the St. Jean-Baptiste neighborhood. As was overwhelmingly the norm throughout the weekend, cheers and encouragement from almost everybody in the area met the bloc. At this point the bloc entered a rather narrow alley that led to a section of the perimeter fence which was largely unguarded. Immediately people went to work on it, cutting with bolt cutters, throwing on grappling hooks, and tying ropes. At this point a bulldozer was driven right up to the fence, presumably to prevent the black bloc from rocking it back and forth until toppling it in the fashion seen on Friday. The driver quickly pressed the bulldozer up against the fence and jumped out.

However, the bulldozer did not do much good, as people quickly cut a wide hole through the fence (and also smashed the windows of the bulldozer). Once again, there was not the massive rush into the perimeter that would have been hoped for, but at least 30 people entered to face what was definitely not more than about 15 policemen. Upon seeing the masked intruders, many of the policemen decided to turn tail and run. The black bloc group that entered the perimeter succeeded in advancing about 75 feet, until being pushed back by rubber bullet fire. Unbeknownst at the time, the next building down the street where the invasion had taken place, was the congress center where the delegates were located.

Eventually the bloc retreated back onto Rue St. Jean, not before blocking the alley with a burning dumpster to cover the





retreat, and attacked the fence at the end of Rue St. Jean. This time a hail of rubber bullets and tear gas immediately greeted the blocs advance and forced everybody back. At this point people turned their energies to the perimeter fencing in front of the cemetery on Rue St. Jean. Again, hundreds of black blocers, with the support, both physical and moral of others present, began cutting down the fence with bolt cutters and pulling it back with ropes. Meanwhile, others were using crowbars to dig up the bricks that made up the sidewalk of the street and piling them into yet another dumpster that had been brought.

After about 20 minutes, with the fence almost completely destroyed and the realization that the cemetery's own metal fencing would prevent much of a concerted advance, the black bloc began to move on, deciding that it was time to try to head up the hill and back to Rene-Levesque. As the bloc made it's way up it encountered yet another section of the perimeter and once again people went straight to work with ropes, cutters, and grappling hooks. Others in the meantime tried to slow the police advancing by jabbing their batons through the fence at them. After playing cat and mouse for a little longer, and taking a well deserved 20 minute break, the bloc eventually made it's way back up to Rene-Levesque.

At this point people found themselves directly in front of the offices of the CIBC bank, one of Canada's largest and most hated banks. It didn't take very long until the first rock flew through the window and the rest of the bloc, which had by now dwindled to about 75 people, was laying siege to the bank. Crowbars, wooden barricades, rocks, batons, and anything else was used to send the capitalists a message.

However, it seems that the bloc was in an area primarily occupied by Salami pacifists, which had refused to work with CLAC/CASA due to the diversity of tactics issue and had even done workshops on how to interfere with property destruction and perform arrests. They quickly began booing, and several actively interfered with the black bloc. A few minor altercations ensued, and one person in the bloc was pepper sprayed by these pacifists (who were also throwing bottles at people). Regardless, this was the only major incident of people not being supportive of the black bloc during the weekend, but definitely not the only act of property destruction.

By now the bloc was down to not more than 50 people. It was therefore decided to head down to St.Jean-Baptiste, where the people were more supportive of bloc actions, to re-organize. It is important to note however that, although Saturday's

black bloc was small for most of the day, it was as, if not more, effective than Friday's because it was composed primarily of people who were always willing to stand their ground against police, were experienced, and just overall knew how to react to situations in a somewhat organized manner (more on this in the analysis).

After another break it was eventually decided to re-attack the perimeter at the end of Rue St. Jean in an organized fashion. People with masks and shields at the front, and the entire bloc composed of organized lines marching forward. However, despite the organization of the offensive, it was pushed back by gas and rubber bullets.

The next, and final, offensive of the small but determined black bloc in the St. Jean neighborhood was carried out in conjunction with another affinity group which was carrying at least a dozen molotov cocktails. The general consensus seemed to be that, although the perimeter was to heavily guarded to break into in the immediate area, this particular action was about re-paying the class traitors in blue with a "warm" salute. Again, the bloc formed up into lines with the shields at the front and advanced the two blocks up a narrow street. As the bloc neared the lines of police, tear gas canisters and rubber bullets began flying. However, as the bloc crept nearer, a hail of molotov cocktails was released onto the police lines, causing more than one to retreat, and drawing a loud cheer from the crowd. Seconds later, the bloc was once again on Rue St. Jean as if nothing had happened.

Evidently, the remnants of the black bloc were exhausted by this point, and it was becoming clearer with every action that people were drifting away. After a discussion regarding what to do next, it was decided to head to under the highway overpass in order to eat, as it was now past 6 p.m. and many people had not had a bite since the night before, and gather more people. However, as the bloc began moving it became evident that it had once again grown significantly in size, to at least 150 people.

As the bloc marched closer and closer to the Cote D'Abraham highway, receiving cheers, water, and vinegar from local residents, it became clear that a re-grouping break under the highway was not going to be a possibility, as one could see clouds of tear gas rising from that direction.

As the bloc came out onto the Cote D'Abraham, the sight that greeted people was truly incredible. The perimeter fence to the right with the water cannon spraying from behind, several rubber bullet

shooters posted behind it and to their left a line of shielded riot police blocking a side street. In front of them and all the way down the highway, thousands of people assembled. Some were beating rhythmically on the guardrails, a beating that would not stop for about 10 hours, others were providing people with water and vinegar, and towards the front hundreds of black bloc fighters and Quebecois locals crouched behind the guardrails and the makeshift barricades of street signs and wooden crates, fighting back with stones, slingshots, paint bombs, fireworks, molotovs, bottles, and whatever else was at hand.

Again, the most striking aspect of this battle, apart from the number of people involved and the many hours that it lasted, was the sheer lack of fear displayed by those involved. Several examples clearly illustrate this. The first would be the group of about 20 black blocers that took up positions behind a small staircase against a building near the line of riot police. They constantly fired their slingshots at the police and made advances, despite the rubber bullet firing riot cop that would periodically take runs at them. However, what was most astounding is that when the policeman with the rubber bullet gun would run out to shoot at someone, rather than retreat, dozens of people would run towards him, forcing him to beat a hasty retreat. Likewise, every once in a while police would launch concerted teargas attacks, launching about 10 simultaneously, yet, instead of retreating, people would rush forward, almost competing to get at the tear gas canisters and launch them back to the police lines. As a result the police would be completely blinded. Dozens of fighters would take advantage of this to rush forward, take up positions, launch molotovs, and generally lay siege to the line of police.

After several hours of this the police began to advance, slowly pushing people back down the highway and onto the road. What had by now become a mass of black blocers, other demonstrators, and Quebecois locals angered by the police invasion of their city fought back, making barricades everywhere, lighting fires (nearly 90 we later found out), and generally resisting by any means possible.

At approximately 3 a.m. police began attempting to break everything up. People again resisted, but also turned their attention to the store windows around, such as that of a bank and a Subway fast food restaurant. Unfortunately, by approximately 5 a.m. it was all over.

**Severino  
Barricada Collective**





As the dust settles from the massive and hugely successful anti-capitalist mobilization in Quebec, it becomes time to take a look at where the revolutionary anti-capitalist movement stands, some of the lessons of Quebec (for the movement in general, and for black blocs more specifically), what went well, and what didn't go so well. In addition, the events of the 20th and 21st in Quebec, coupled with the uprisings of the oppressed African-American communities of Cincinnati, go a long way towards dispelling several somewhat common claims of the liberal and authoritarian pacifist left regarding black blocs, and more specifically, black bloc tactics and their acceptance, or lack thereof, in oppressed and impoverished communities.

### **The Media, the Grassroots Effort, and the Local Community**

The first important lesson of Quebec is that there can be no understating the importance of a radical movement, such as ours, developing a strong working relationship with the communities in which we will find ourselves. While it is true that the people of Quebec have a proud history of resistance to authority and street-fighting, the massive participation of the local population in the battles of the 20th and 21st cannot be attributed solely to this. Since a large part of the action took place either in the St. Jean-Baptiste neighborhood itself or in the areas directly surrounding it, a large part of the warm welcome that greeted the black bloc and others, which included citizens opening their doors to militants, offering water and vinegar, and often taking to the streets themselves, has to be attributed to the public relations work done by CLAC and CASA, as well as by local anarchists. We must make no mistake about, had it not been for the massive participation of Quebec locals, chances are that the police would have not had too much difficulty controlling, and eventually dispersing, what would have been a group of very isolated militant anti-capitalists.

This leads to another point which, although many feel should already have been clear, until recently was resisted by just as many. This is that we have nothing to hope for from the corporate media, we should expect nothing from them, and we should absolutely not change any of our tactics or messages in order to pander to them. We should instead treat them as the servants of capital, and thus our enemies, that they are. This is not to say that they are not on occasion capable of writing accurate or somewhat positive articles about revolutionaries, as indeed several articles in the Quebec press about the black bloc were quite good. However, it seems that corporate journalists are only inspired enough to research articles and abstain from repeating police misinformation after they are targeted by demonstrators and shown that their lies and misinformation will not be tolerated. Fortunately, this message seemed to be abundantly clear to the black bloc participants in Quebec City, as people made it a point to deny pictures to journalists, stop them from

## **THE BLACK BLOC IN QUEBEC: AN ANALYSIS**

filming, taking their tapes and rolls if they were caught doing so, and targeting any and all media vehicles that crossed their paths. Once more, the massive propaganda effort carried out by CLAC/CASA and Quebec anarchists, distributing tens of thousands of newspapers and fliers, often door to door, was successful in countering the fear-mongering of the police and media, and certainly changed the dynamics of the demonstrator/local citizen interaction, from one of fear, to one of solidarity. This is the clearest example possible that our energies should not, as many liberal leftists seem to think, be directed towards developing a "good" relationship with the corporate media, but to fighting them while at the same time developing our own links with people and strengthening our media outlets and projects.

### **The Black Bloc: Material Preparedness**

It can be said that, despite all the inconveniences and setbacks (which were quite a few), the Quebec City black bloc was one of the most effective in terms of actions performed, it's relationship with other demonstrators and locals, the number of arrests suffered, how far it went towards exemplifying to "middle of the road" demonstrators the importance of fighting back, and the image it conveyed of anarchism (which is of course not limited to the black bloc, but it is for the moment our most well known aspect). Once more, the effectiveness of the black bloc, particularly during the course of Saturday's actions, is not due to sheer luck. It is the result of several very clear factors, some which are definitely positive, some which, while they may sometimes work in our favor, certainly need to be analyzed more closely, and some which are certainly negative.

In the run-up to the Quebec City mobilization, many expected the Quebec black bloc to be the largest yet. Evidently, it did not turn out to be so, mainly due to the border issue. However, the relatively small numbers, definitely never more than 500-600, were balanced by the level of preparedness and commitment of many of the participants, and the support of the locals.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the Quebec black bloc is without a doubt to a very large extent due to how well equipped it was. Many people had the basic gas masks and goggles, but a great deal also were equipped with helmets, shields, padding, heavy duty gloves,

bolt cutters, ropes, grappling hooks, and not to mention the abundance of batons and hockey pucks. The fact is, it was very probably the best equipped black bloc in North American history. Evidently, this allowed people to resist tear gas attacks better, stand up to rubber bullets, bring down the fence in different areas with great speed, and in some cases even hold their own in hand to hand, or baton to baton, combat with riot police. This all served to embolden the black bloc, and others who were present, and allowed for scenes such as those that took place during breaches in the perimeter with black bloc participants chasing riot policemen or on the highway overpass with dozens of people charging police lines.

The one nagging question is: Despite several important setbacks, such as the arrest of the Germinal affinity group on its way to Quebec with a lot of material, and all the people, including most of Ya Basta! that were stopped at the border with quite a bit of material as well, what would have happened had it all arrived safely in Quebec City!? Hopefully, this question will be answered this October in Washington DC, where for most people at least, there will be no border to cross.

It is clear that Quebec City marked an important step forward for black blocs in terms of material preparedness for action, and this is a trend we can only hope to see continued in the future.

### **The Black Bloc: Tactics, Empowerment, and "Other People."**

The Quebec City black bloc can also be seen as having been a clearly successful in dispelling the common claim of liberals, authoritarian pacifists, and others who oppose militant street tactics. This claim, which we have all most likely already had to listen to, is that the actions of the black bloc are somehow the result of the alienation of middle or upper class youths who, due to the boredom of their lives or some misplaced sense of rebellion, seek cheap thrills at demonstrations, but that they are actually alienating to those who suffer repression on a constant basis and in the end counter-productive.

However, the fact is that oppressed communities, such as the African-American community of Cincinnati most recently, are not afraid to resist their oppressors by taking to the streets and fighting back. Militant tactics are not alienating, but rather empowering, serving to demonstrate that there is no need to kneel down and beg when faced with repression, as the power of the people, when not pacified by reformism





and the avenues of the state, is infinitely more powerful.

This was again made clear by the willingness of the people of Quebec to take to the streets to fight alongside the black bloc and other demonstrators, as well as their healthy dislike of police. While the situation of the French speaking people of Quebec has certainly changed dramatically over the last several decades, a large section of the Quebecois youth, and of the population in general, still identify themselves as oppressed, primarily due to the question of national liberation. In any case, the fact is that they took to the streets en masse and resisted alongside the black bloc and other demonstrators. All this despite the fact that repression after riots and street battles is often swift and heavy in Quebec, and nobody is more aware of it than the locals.

The vast, and still growing, support for the black bloc and it's tactics was also made abundantly clear simply by the fact that almost anywhere the bloc went in Quebec, it was met with cheers, clapping, and all sorts of encouragement, whether from fellow demonstrators or from locals. Of course this was to a large extent due to the fact that almost everybody's energies were focused on the perimeter fence, which few people had qualms about destroying. However, even the militant tactics (molotovs, stones, direct confrontation) were overwhelmingly greeted with cheers.

There was however one glaring exception. This occurred when the black bloc severely damaged the CIBC bank offices, destroying virtually every window and setting fire to the inside. As soon as the action began several people from SalAMI began putting themselves in the way, some physically interfered, many booed, and one even pepper-sprayed somebody in the black bloc. Many are claiming that this is proof that the only reason that the bloc had so much support was that property damage was kept to a minimum, but that this incident shows that it is not an accepted tactic.

This is simply false, and it is important to show it as such. While the black bloc focused primarily on the fence, there was still quite a bit of property damage. Several banks, a Shell gas station, a Subway restaurant, quite a few media vehicles, and at least one police vehicle. All of these actions took place in very crowded areas, and the only time they drew any significant negative response was with the SalAMI authoritarians, who had refused to work with CLAC/CASA precisely due to the issue of diversity of tactics.

#### **Black Bloc Spectators?**

That we live in a spectator/consumer oriented society is no news to most people.

However, with the recent rise in acceptance of the black bloc and it's tactics a phenomenon that is most likely the result of this spectator society seems to be spreading to the black bloc. It was true in DC during the inauguration, and it was certainly true in Quebec. Whether it is something to be criticized, accepted as inevitable, or encouraged remains unclear (at least to this writer), but it certainly needs to be addressed.

Quite simply, this is the phenomenon of the "black bloc spectator." People who dress in black, march with the black bloc, chant, etc. Yet, when conflict begins, be it unarresting, property damage, confrontations with police, or whatever else, they disappear, or watch safely from the back. Examples of this would be the people who ran as soon as the first line of police appeared in DC during the inauguration or those who disappeared when the fence was torn down on Friday the 20th in Quebec. In both cases after events such as these, the blocs numbers were halved. Of course some of this is due to other factors, such as dispersal, being lost in a crowd, etc., but a fair number of people in the black bloc seem to be there simply to add to the numbers.

This does have it's advantages however. The first is that the larger the mass of people, the more the cover for those doing direct actions. Secondly, regardless of to what extent one participates or not, being in the black bloc is in itself a risk that one is taken and implies a certain level of commitment, and it is very possible that those who are shy about taking part in direct actions are so only out of inexperience, but will eventually learn from watching others.

Yet, the disadvantages of having many "spectators" within the bloc are also clear. Among others they include giving people who are doing actions a false sense of security and making large cohesive actions more difficult to carry out. However, the greatest disadvantage is that going to a black bloc without being prepared to assume the possible risks and consequences is to a large extent irresponsible. The black bloc is a tactic, and like any tactic the people carrying it out have to meet certain criteria in order to make it effective. If one is not willing to deal with heights, one should evidently not enter an affinity group doing banner drops from buildings for example. Likewise, if one is not prepared to fulfill at least one of the functions generally expected from people in a black bloc if the need arises, then it is probably a bad idea to be in one.

A clear example of this is the effectiveness of the black bloc on the 21st. While relatively small, fluctuating between 50 and 200 people for most of the day, it was composed primarily of people who were

prepared both mentally and materially for the risks associated with being in a black bloc. This resulted in people staying tight, avoiding arrest, being mobile, and accomplishing many very effective actions.

The fact is that the black bloc is a tactic. This means that it's primary aim is effectiveness. If a black bloc is not effective, whether it be at getting a message across, heightening visibility of anarchist or revolutionary presence in a struggle, or performing specific actions, then it serves no purpose. It is not meant to be an all are welcome free for all. This is something that the German autonomes understand (precisely the reason why each line is composed only of people who know each other, to weed out cops and tourists), and it is probably something we in North America should begin to think about.

Anarchism is about freedom, but it is also about personal responsibility. If one is not willing to accept that as a participant in a black bloc one is, amongst other things, responsible for looking out for the safety of others (i.e being willing to perform unarrests) and having other people's backs when they need it, then you are not acting responsibly.

#### **Conclusion**

Despite the inevitable shortcomings and setbacks, it is fair to say that Quebec City marked a step forward for the revolutionary anti-capitalist movement, and certainly for the black bloc. It is becoming clearer and clearer that we are riding a wave of popular discontent, coupled with interest about (and open minds towards) anti-authoritarian alternatives to capitalism, that North America has not seen in many years. What we need to begin looking at now is how to better structure ourselves in order to be more effective in future actions and in order to defend ourselves from the inevitable repression of the ever more threatened state, how to continue to build our links to other communities, and how to begin laying the groundwork for a new society. In short, how to build an effective, grass-roots, anti-authoritarian movement towards a classless, stateless society. The infrastructure is to a large extent already in place, it is a matter of using and expanding it intelligently.

See you in October! Until then....Class War! Anytime, Anywhere!

Nicolas  
Barricada Collective





# CHINA BEFORE THE WTO

One of the defining features of Chinese society at the turn of the century is the deepening urban/rural split. The big Chinese cities are now part of the first world: huge skyscrapers fill the skyline and are being built at a furious rate, there is a constant ringing from cell phones, gated communities spring up out of farm land on the outskirts of the cities, and the latest fashion is sold on every street. In the countryside, where 75% of the population lives, life is getting tougher and unemployment is growing.

In the late 1970's, the Chinese reforms under Deng Xiaoping began in the countryside by dismantling the collectives and allowing households to take responsibility for growing food on leased plots. Under such a system rural incomes grew rapidly, and, in the late 1980's and 1990's, reform moved on to the urban industries. It is only in the last few years that state industries have had to deal with the pressures of competition. Huge layoffs have been the primary way for these industries to become profitable; still, many have gone bankrupt. It has only been by maintaining a national growth rate of around 8% that many of these urban industrial laborers have been given new jobs, although many remain unemployed. The nature of their jobs has also changed. The old state industries guaranteed one a job for life, health care, schooling for one's children, and housing. These sectors of society are increasingly being privatized and most jobs offer little assistance. Many of the urban unemployed have been given make-work jobs with low pay and no benefits. And most new urban jobs are being created by private and foreign investment.

At the same time the rural economy has stagnated. Rural enter-



prises had grown in number in the 1980's, soaking up much of the excess rural labor. But as capitalist valorization plays an increasingly important role in decision making, these state supported enterprises have been failing at a very high rate, and only about one quarter of surplus agricultural laborers are finding employment in rural enterprises at the moment. In addition, there is little private and almost no foreign investment in rural areas. In the 1990's, it is the rural unemployed who have grown the fastest (the rural unemployed is estimated at around 130 million).

Yet the state seems to fear urban unrest the most, and, in order to keep the cities stable, it restricts the movement of rural unemployed into the cities. Internal migration is for the most part illegal: one needs a residence permit to live in a city. The state also raised the price of train tickets significantly in order to stem the tide of the rural poor. The status of being illegal immigrants in one's own country has only increased the precariousness of the rural poor, and, at the same time, it

has produced a huge reserve of cheap labor. Most of the sweatshops that produce goods for export are filled with such laborers, mostly rural women.

These changes in Chinese society are due to the leadership's decision to bring the Chinese economy under the reign of capitalist valorization. Since 1992, the Chinese government has moved to make Chinese industry competitive on the world market. One of the more significant moves to insert the economy into the global regime of value was the 1994 devaluation of the Chinese currency. This devaluation is one of the primary causes of the 1997 Asian economic crisis, as it made the labor costs of smaller Asian nations less competitive thus hurting their investment. The increase in foreign investment in China (almost all in the coastal cities) has been extremely important in soaking up unemployed labor, but it hasn't been enough. To deal with this problem the government has also rapidly increased its spending on infrastructure. Yet again, most of this investment has been on the

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## A Proposal To The Black Bloc From Within The Back Bloc: The Formation Of A Tactical Facilitation Core

\*The following is one specific proposal from many that will soon be published as a joint communique from the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective and the Columbus Anti-Racist Action. These proposals are the result of a two day meeting between people from within the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective and the Columbus ARA. In essence this document as well as those still forth coming are a series of amendments to the prior document 'A Communique On Tactics And Organization To The Black Bloc From Within The Black Bloc.' While this prior document must be considered flawed, we still recommend that it be read in order to place the below amendment, as well as those soon to be made public, in context. As of print, it is available through AK Press.

Our experiences over the course of the last year has taught us a lot regarding the actual and potential effectiveness of Black Blocs during large demonstrations. A16 demonstrated the facilities of large blocs used in tight conjunction with non violent contingents. It showed us how the combined tactics of physical self defense (from the Bloc) and non-violent lockdowns can, at this historical juncture, result in effective occupations of large sections of the city scape. J20 showed how a tightly knit Bloc, lined with defensive banners around its perimeters, can help foster confidence and act as a more substantial deterrent to targeted police arrests. A20 showed how even a relatively small Bloc (as on Saturday, the 21st) can become a substantial fighting force when the physical and mental commitment is there. However, our experiences have also illustrated certain shortcomings that we thus far are yet to overcome. Specifically our lack of a democratic tactical command structure has hindered our abilities to act with more punctuating speed and tactical ferociousness. In certain circumstances this failure has resulted in us becoming bogged down in indecisiveness (specifically regarding movement), and hence has put us in danger as well as lead to arrests (i.e. on the Monday of the A16 action). Therefore, we contend that we need to develop a democratic tactical command structure which heightens our mobility while simultaneously not compromising our Anarchist principles.

In regards to the this, we propose that the present use of elected affinity group spokes people be expanded to that of acute tactical facilitator (a-tacs). The role of this person should be to be prepared to exert internal affinity group influence when ever a circumstance does not allow for the traditional consensus process and to help facilitate the organized movement of their immediate sec-

tion as recommended by the general tactical facilitation core (\*to be discussed below). In addition, each affinity group should also elect an alternate in case the first is incapacitated due to injury or arrest.

Following the general meeting of the Black Bloc, at which the broad plans for the days action should have already been discussed, debated and then decided upon based on consensus, all such elected a-tacs should meet in private (such privacy here is recommended as a security precaution). At this meeting a general tactical facilitation core (g-tacs) should be elected, again by consensus. These g-tacs should act as the facilitators of Bloc movement in such a way as it complies with the general plan of action as defined at the prior open meeting. The identity of the g-tacs will be made discreetly known to all trusted affinity group members through their elected spokes/a-tacs as befitting following the closure of the closed spokes meeting. Any affinity group which has had their a-tac elected to the tactical facilitation core should elect a new a-tac.

In cases in which the Bloc is expected to be large and to march on mass, affinity groups should be made responsible for specific sections of the Bloc; specifically the front, right side, left side and rear (this should done at the general open meeting). In turn the elected g-tacs should number 12 persons. These twelve should be further divided into four groups of three. In turn these three should be positioned as such: 1.) a person at the specific section which they will be directly responsible for (front, rear, left or right). 2.) a person near the middle of the Bloc where they will be together with the representatives of the other sections. 3) a person to act as a runner between their sectional g-tac and the g-tac cluster in the middle. In general, all time sensitive decisions specifically regarding movement should be recommended by the consensus of the central g-tac core based on information emanating from the specific perimeter tacs, and reliable reconnaissance information.

In addition, these g-tacs should also entail certain role specific support persons in order that they are able to function efficiently and safely. Hence, all g-tacs stationed at the perimeters should be equipped with two persons from their affinity group or otherwise. One of which should be responsible for maintaining ra-

dio communication with reconnaissance teams and/or other important constituents. The other should be present in order to watch the tacs back. We must be aware of the fact that these folk will quickly be identified by the forces of the State, and therefore will likely be singled out for arrest. Likewise, the central g-tac core should also be equipped with a few persons on radio, and a few persons concerning themselves with security.

Also, the specific roles of the various g-tacs, be it runner, perimeter person or core cluster, should be rotated as the days action ensues. Again, such a rotation is to limit any developing trend aimed at a psychological tendency towards authoritarianism amongst the central g-tac core. And again, it should be reminded that the function of these folk will primarily have to do with Bloc movement (i.e which road to take, which way to go at an intersection). They will not be playing the role of generals or abstract leaders in anyway.

Here it is important to stress several things. First, we do not advocate the creating of a permanent officer clique. These elected positions should only last as long as the action at hand. If the action lasts more then a single day, then it would be good to elect new tacs for the different days. Also, their positions should be revocable by the general whole at anytime. Lastly, the influence which they shall wield will not be beyond the role of facilitators of a general plan adopted to the general meeting of the Black Bloc. Any steps they may attempt to take beyond these perimeters would be grounds for dismissal. And of course, we are not advocating the formalization of any authoritarian army structure. It must be made clear that all participants in the Bloc innately reserve the right to disobey g-tac suggestions as well as to desert. In such the adoption of such a structure would be consistent with Anarchist principles of organization. The Anarchist militias recognized the need for such structure during the Spanish Civil War and so should we.

In conclusion, we hope that this proposal is signed and then incorporated into practice by the individuals and collectives which make up the Back Bloc as a whole. However, if this proposal is still unacceptable, we hope that it will be further amended so as to sufficiently address the needs that it pertains to, while becoming acceptable to the Black Bloc in its functioning entirety.

IN SOLIDARITY

The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective  
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**BARRICADE #7, MAY 2001**





# ON THE NECESSITY OF REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE



*"It is the obligation of every person who claims to oppose oppression to resist the oppressor by every means at his or her disposal. Not to engage in physical resistance, armed resistance to oppression, is to serve the interests of the oppressor; no more, no less. There are no exceptions to the rule, no easy out..." (Assata Shakur, 1984)*

Let us have no illusions about it: the revolution will require an armed confrontation against the forces of the State, the capitalist class, and the potential rise of reactionary right-wing elements. It seems self-evident that the ruling class will not simply step down and forfeit all their privileges and authority, and will act to ensure, by any means necessary, that they remain in power. Clearly they will use force and violence to break any kind of revolutionary uprising or movement. We can see this already in our lives with the every day violence of the police and military, and the surveillance we endure, not to mention to brutality we face at mass demonstrations. However, there are still numerous sectors within the revolutionary movement, who claim on moral grounds that we must never use violence, especially against other human beings. And there are others who propose that we must never use violence except as a last resort and only as a means of absolute self-defense. The logical conclusions we are forced to come to from these presumptions is that we must never fire a shot unless fired upon; in short, that we must never fight back until we are already defeated. These ideologies must be recognized for what they are: that is, infinitely more dangerous than any ideology which recognizes the eventual necessity, and practicality, of violence.

Even the more moderate of these views forces us to imagine a revolutionary situation, let us say a general strike or even an insurrection, where we are *morally forbidden* from engaging in preemptive military attacks against the forces of the State, our oppressors, or any reactionary groups. One is left with the picture of millions of people taking over their workplaces or out in the streets demonstrating... and simply waiting for the State to attack, on it's own terms, when it is prepared. Given that we will never be on par, in terms of military technology, with the State, nor in many cases would we ever *want* to be on par with them, one is left wondering what exactly pacifist revolutionaries see as the goal of a revolutionary movement. It does not seem to be possible to create a liberated society through solely non-

violent means, for what would happen to our movement, or to the revolutionary uprising, when confronted with the absolute and visceral force of the State, if we were morally bound to not attack first and thereby cripple their means to crush us? The only conclusion we are left with is that those committed to non-violence wish to beg our oppressors to release their strangle-hold on society and simply let us have our way because it is the right thing to do. This neo-Gandhian view completely ignores historical and contemporary realities, and shows a lack of understanding of the nature of the capitalist state in general.

The mere fact that these ideologies reject all violence out of hand is disturbing, and the claim that many pacifists make that violence "makes us as bad as them" goes a long way in understanding their logic. Beginning with the correct assumption that all oppression is wrong, they then take a quantum leap and declare all violence to be oppression. This absolutist view simply does not hold, particularly when we keep in mind that anarchism and other revolutionary theories are inherently *social* in nature. That is to say, our understanding of society does not, and should not, come from examining individuals, but from examining social groups and power structures. From this perspective, we can clearly see that the ruling class is both inherently repressive by its mere existence, and also highly materially oppressive and violent on every level. Faced with this conclusion, it seems only common sense to realize that direct action, whether violent or not, to stop the oppression which the elite carry out is justified. However, given that the elite *will* use violence, it is clear that violent actions *will* be required. Revolutionary violence is an act of liberation, an act of resistance, never an act of oppression. To claim that stopping an oppressor via violence is oppressive, is tantamount to claiming that killing someone to stop them from committing a rape is an act of oppression: clearly a ludicrous statement.

Still other pacifists make the

claim that "violence begets violence" and we should therefore abstain from participating in it. This cliché holds some truth, though not the extent which some would have us believe. Tense situations into which violence enters generally create a violent response from the other party. However, let us put this in context, and remove it from the abstract. In our society, it is the ruling class, and their protectors- the police and military- which are by far the most violent element. Given this, it is no wonder that we see random flares of violence against them in the form of riots or attacks on the police. Thus, it is *their* violence which is begetting our resistance, which is in turn expressed through violence. And while it is true that violence begets violence in this way, it is not generally true that violent acts lead to a downward spiral of absolute and unthinking violence; the picture many pacifists paint for us. In fact, violent situations almost always end when one side is defeated. This tendency is incorporated as a central principle in revolutionary violence, as it must be our goal to defeat the forces which seek to quell our revolution, so that we may successfully create a society based on an economy and societal apparatus which negates all possibilities of exploitation.

Being anarchists, or any other kind of revolutionary, by definition puts us at war with the ruling elite, and by extension, the State. Our enemies are fully aware of this, and it is time that we recognize the fact as well. When we call forth that infamous anti-war slogan "No war between nations," let us not forget the second half of it: "No peace between classes." We should be clear that we are for peace, but that true peace, which first necessitates liberation, can only be attained through a deliberate transformation of society. It does not seem so outrageous to claim that the revolution must be defended (it should be noted that by "defense" we mean both ensuring the success of the revolution in dismantling systems of oppression, *and ensuring that these systems cannot return*), by violent force

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**BARRICADA #7, MAY 2001**



# ARMED SELF DEFENSE

## AN INTERVIEW WITH THE TACTICAL DEFENSE CAUCUS OF THE JACKSONVILLE ABCF

**B:** People tend to assume anything involving guns in the left/anarchist movement is the work of macho yahoos, so before we begin, we want to dispel that by going into your training and qualifications.

**JABCF:** The Tactical Defense Caucus (TDC) is a caucus of the Anarchist Black Cross Federation. Justin of Jacksonville TDC has been instructing activists in the tactical and defensive application of firearms since 1996, Neil of Jacksonville TDC has been instructing activists since 1998. Our best qualifications are the people who have been to our classes and the way they felt the sessions went. Asking them about how they viewed the class and what they felt they learned in the time they spent with us make for the greatest references. Aside from this experience in teaching, we have both taken professional classes from some of the best known names in the tactical and defensive firearms industry. In addition to taking formal courses on the use of handguns, shotguns, and rifles, we have also taken instructor classes from the NRA who have certified us to teach students how to safely and legally use firearms. To keep our own skills sharp, we participate in defensive oriented competitions, which are open to the public. These competitions stress and reward the use of proper tactics and techniques. We don't always win (sometimes we do!), but we are usually among the top percentile of competitors, which include police and SWAT officers, DEA agents, US Marshals, FBI agents and other professionally trained individuals. We also constantly keep up on the ever changing and developing tactics and ideas concerning the legal use of force to defend ones self and community. We would be glad to share our specific credentials with anyone who would like to take classes from us and will be glad to refer others to those who have completed our courses.

**B:** The other major criticism of ASD is that it is premature or misguided to discuss anything having to do with weapons here in North America and we would like you to talk about the threats you have received from the right and the left and about armed self defense in general.

**JABCF:** The problem with this sentiment, which is often repeated, is that when is the right time? After you are under attack? After you have already been threatened? If you wait that long, it may be far too late to really learn how to

defend yourself. We have been involved in the study and use of self-defense for several years now, but are still merely students ourselves. People who come and take our classes find out quickly how hard it is learning to shoot straight at a cardboard target 5 yards in front of them. And this is in a controlled environment, at a stationary target, under no time constraints. Further, learning to shoot straight is in reality a very small part of beginning to be prepared. The truth is it takes many years and much practice to begin becoming proficient and prepared to defend ones self. We would like to stress that what we have stated here is in no way limited to the use of arms. There are many ways in which you can defend yourself and if people are serious about learning to do so, they should learn how to do so unarmed as well as armed.

We would also like to ask those people who feel like it is premature to consider histories other than their own. It should come as no surprise to anyone that the two of us are most involved in learning to defend ourselves and the groups to which we belong. We have had several threats ourselves from not only Nazi skinheads, but anarchists and leftists as well. In the last few years, we have received a half dozen letters that contain threats of physical violence and death. These are merely the letters we have received. We're sure others, which we have not seen, exist. In view of these incidents which threaten our security directly, the politically motivated murders of Lin Newborn and Daniel Shersty of Los Vegas Anti Racist Action, the threats of death and violence the anarchist band Propagandhi received on their recent tour, and many other examples, we wonder out loud that if it is premature now, how many more threats, and deaths will it take before it becomes appropriate?

And again, learning to defend yourself with arms is only part of the solution. Firearms generally require a degree distance, and the use threat of death or serious bodily injury from an attacker(s). If you are attacked with less than potentially lethal force, or at such a close distance that firearms are not an option, you should be prepared to defend yourself accordingly. However, becoming a student of the fighting arts may not help you or your group against attackers at a distance with firearms. Making sure you are not over reliant on any one tool of defense is critical.

Even more critical than your skill at

using these tools is becoming confident in yourself and your ability. The best way to do so is to have a proper defensive mindset, the will to win and survive, to be safe and aware of your surroundings, to practice, and develop your skill. All of this will help to build the confidence you will need.

**B:** How do we go about setting up the infrastructure to get the knowledge and expertise you're speaking of to the movement? Discuss your initiatives and ideas?

**JABCF:** The first thing we have to do is convince people that it is NOT premature to discuss these ideas, and take action. By constantly pointing out the contradictions that exist now, and which have in fact always existed always. We can tell people about how only 3 years ago, Lin and Dan were executed in the Las Vegas desert by nazi skinheads for being anti racists. We can tell people about how nazi's and members of the

TDC Member Training at the Range





Klu Klux Klan opened fire on and murdered 5 participants of a public Communist Workers Party demonstration. We can tell people about the hundreds of Black Panthers and American Indian Movement who were murdered by the state, racists and other leftists. We can show how before almost all of these deaths there were signs and hints of the violence that was to come. When considering all of this, how can we not take the threats made against ourselves seriously?

Once people realize that it is not too early, we need to show people that talking about becoming prepared is not enough. We need to point out that owning guns is not enough. We need to show people that going out and practicing shooting is not enough. Members of the Communist Workers Party had and used their weapons when the Klan attacked them. But when the smoke cleared, it was discovered that the CWP didn't even hit a single one of their attackers. In contrast, the Nazis and KKK attackers *picked out* 5 leaders and killed them, they shot and wounded several others. So even though the CWP had and used their weapons, the results indicate that more needed to be done.

We attempt to not only show people that it is indeed time to not only start talking about defending ourselves and our movement, but it is past time to begin to learn to become proficient. We want people to not only start thinking and acting, but also pursuing the correct course. There are many ways to learn to defend yourself, time has proven some to work, time has proven some to fail. Which methods will you use, those of the losers or those of the winners? How will you even know which is which? The TDC hopes to take our studies in this field and offer it to the leftist community. Paving a path that will show us how to be best prepared, how to safely, properly and efficiently use the tools of defense be they your hands, your weapons, or your most valuable weapon, your mind.

We hope to achieve this through interviews like this, through the use of our upcoming 'zine "Condition Red Quarterly" which will be available by the time you read this. By doing workshops and releasing information. We have currently released two instructional videos, Shotgun Tactics for Self Defense and the Urban Rifle. We are currently staging the outline for our third video, the Heavy Duty Pistol. We have written two books which are not yet published, "Condition Red, Handgun Tactics for

Self Defense" and "Building the fighting AR15".

Building an infrastructure is terribly difficult, especially when so many are so hostile towards your ideas. But we do have some definite ideas we would like for people to consider and take seriously. First is safety. Accidents and mistakes can often be counted in deaths or injuries. We strongly advocate and endorse the use of the 4 Main Safety Rules. If you are following all of these safety rules at all times, you will not have an accident. If you do, you were breaking one or more of them. Second is that this is deadly serious and your best weapon is your mind. Therefore, a commitment to preparedness is crucial, being prepared means being aware, and we strongly encourage people to abstain from the use of drugs and alcohol the more and more they get involved with arms. This also deals with the issue of security.

The TDC is a completely legal formation and we are under great scrutiny. We have been stopped enroute to and from the range, we have been stopped at the range. Everything we do needs to be 100% completely legal. Police have tried to imply we have had stolen and illegal weapons, they have tried to imply we were in possession of drugs. Our enemies, ideological and otherwise like for us to be defenseless. Any sign of our becoming more self sufficient or secure will be attacked. As an aboveground formation we need not give our enemies any excuses to attack us. Be safe, be secure, and be smart.

**B: Many are concerned that those who are proficient with weapons will become some sort of movement vanguard, how do you respond to that?**

**JABCF: Becoming proficient with arms**

or defensive skills is no measure of political maturity or political correctness. Many things are required for a movement to become successful and stable. An ability to defend itself is only part of this. A community able to defend itself without a political direction will go no where. It will aspire to nothing, it will create nothing. Being proficient with arms is no more important than any other political activity. But in a hostile environment such as the one in which we exist, it is no less important. The work we do as the TDC should be neither romanticized, nor demonized. It exists because it is necessary to exist. Not because it is especially important or glamorous. We have a specific interest in which we can offer what we hope is a growing movement we would like to see successful. This is one thing we have to offer. It is important to note that this is not the only activity we are involved in and that TDC members are very active in many other fronts of our anarchist community. This is because we know it will take much more than the limited activity of the TDC for the anarchist community to become a strong and vital movement. We offer what we know about this specific field to *help* bring us all closer to victory. TDC efforts play a part but are in no way by themselves worthy or even able to lead a movement, as a vanguard would imply.

For more info and answers to questions about the TDC, our classes in Combative Shotgun, Heavy Duty Pistol or Urban Rifle, our zine, Condition Red Quarterly, our video series, books or fliers, please get in touch with us:

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# THE WILL TO WIN: WOMEN AND SELF-DEFENSE



*"If there was a magic bullet, the perfect weapon for a woman, or any other 'perfect' mode of feminine self defense, it would be worthless without the woman's determination to preserve her life and well being at the expense, if necessary, of her assailants life."*

-Gila May-Hayes

Before we start to discuss how women should start to protect themselves, we must first establish the will to fight. We have been socialized to believe that we are not capable of fighting off a lethal assault. It is ridiculous that there are so many counseling and support organizations for women who have been raped, attacked, and abused but hardly any that work to prepare and prevent these things from happening. We must refuse to be victims and reject the idea that we should submit to our assailants to keep from arousing further violence. In reality, submitting to our assailants will only contribute to future violence against others. You stand a risk of being hurt if you do fight back but you will definitely be hurt if you don't. We must not only resist for our own preservation but also as our social duty to others.

## *The Color codes of Readiness*

**Condition White** State of unreadiness, you're completely oblivious to your surroundings, the perfect target for a predator looking for his next victim. You never want someone to catch you in condition white.

**Condition Yellow** In condition yellow you are relaxed but very aware of your surroundings. You notice if anything is unusual or out of place. If anyone is planning on attacking you, they will not catch you off guard. This is the condition you should be in most of the time. The

only time you should fall into condition white is when you're asleep. It's easy to shift from condition yellow to orange but it's nearly impossible to go from condition white to orange.

**Condition Red** Shifting from condition orange to condition red depends on the attacker. You realize the threat, have a plan, and if s/he makes a move you do what you have to do. When the attacker makes any aggressive action towards you, you are justified in using deadly force against him/her.

It's important to remember that



even if you don't carry a gun you should still follow the color codes. If you're walking down the street, mindful of your surroundings, and someone attacks you and you use any means to defend yourself, you have followed the color codes. You were alert to your surroundings (condition yellow). You were perceptive to a possible threat (condition orange). You took action to defend yourself (condition red).

As women, we must first overcome the idea that we are physically inadequate to fight back against a male adversary. Women have two arms and two legs and a brain. The only thing we

really lack is the will to win. We shall re-ent fear and embrace anger that someone dare attempt to violate us. Through this anger, harness the aggression to annihilate our enemies.

## *Why the Handgun?*

Carrying a handgun is not for everyone. Certainly the principles we've covered thus far can apply to anyone who's willing to fight back in any way. It may be physical. It may be with improvised weapons. It may be with a shotgun by your bed. But understand that the handgun is the ultimate equalizer! When it comes to the handgun, mindset and skill are what matters and for this gender has no bias.

## *Self Motivation*

There are more men involved in self defense training, so chances are, you'll start out learning from a man. It's important for everyone to train together to build team work, but don't become dependent on anyone else to lead you or motivate you. Train on your own when you can. We need to develop more women leaders. With other types of self defense training, such as martial arts, men may have the advantage due to difference in size and strength. but

with firearms training, we're all equal. With proper training any woman can perform as well with a handgun as any man.

You're not going to become an expert over night. It's going to take a lot of hard work and dedication. If you don't get something right away don't become discouraged. Take it step by step and learn the basics first.

The first thing you should be thinking about is safety. Follow the four main safety rules listed below at all times... always, no matter what. Make performing them become habitual, like second nature. they are important to know and practice. Also, you will find that any



and practice. Also, you will find that negligent discharge (unintentional firing of the weapon) occurs when at least one of the first three rules were being broken. Following these rules will leave you and everyone around you safer. Think of them every time you handle a firearm, and teach them to others. Once you learn how to handle a gun properly and safely, then you can start worrying about hitting the target.

#### THE 4 MAIN SAFETY RULES:

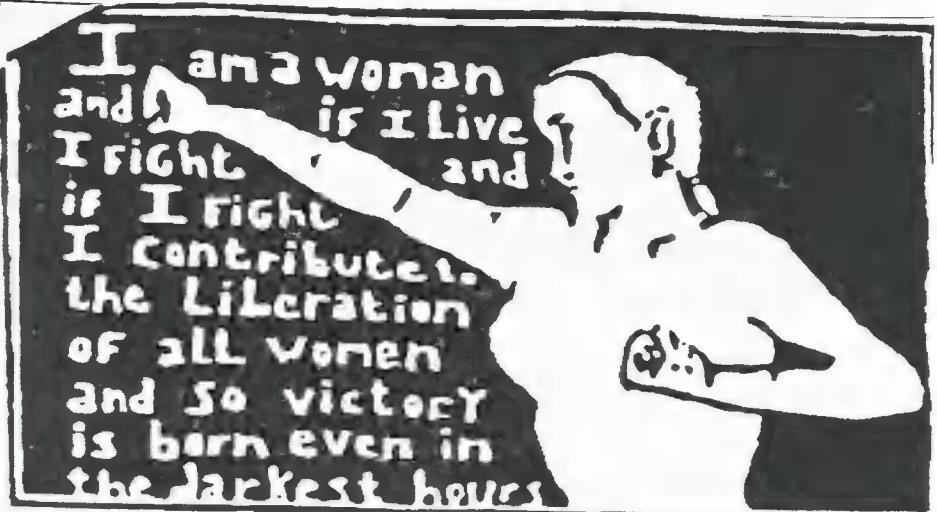
1. All guns are always loaded. Never assume that one is not. Never take anyone's word for it. You don't know until you check it. Even when you see that it is unloaded, treat it as if it were, this builds good practice.
2. Never let the muzzle point at anything you're not willing to destroy (loaded or unloaded, always follow this rule.)
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on target. this is one rule that a lot of beginners have a hard time with and is also important to perform even unloaded.
4. Be sure of your target and what's beyond. Identify the threat before you shoot.

#### Beginning to train

When you start training, find a gun that is comfortable to you. If your hands are small you might have a hard time with some handguns. If you know someone with guns, try them and see what works for you. If you don't know anyone with guns, you can sometimes go to a gun-range and rent them. Some of the things to take into consideration are, the size, the caliber, automatic or revolver, etc.

The size of the gun is important if you're planning on carrying. You want something easy to conceal. The caliber is also important. You want to be able to take someone down with one shot, if necessary. I don't suggest carrying anything smaller than a .38 or a 9mm, we in Jacksonville prefer the larger .45 ACP.

Revolvers are good as far as size and simplicity, but I wouldn't choose a revolver over an automatic. You have to get used to the heavy trig-



ger pull of the revolver. Contrary to what you see on TV, it is unsafe to thumb-cock a revolver. You just pull the trigger all the way back and it pulls the hammer back and lets it go. I prefer a single-action. They have a lighter trigger press, which for me, promises better accuracy. Most importantly, just find what works best for you. Don't rule anything out just because it doesn't come naturally. It's best to familiarize yourself with a variety of firearms. You don't want to be limited to handguns only, because you might find yourself in a situation where the only thing you have access to is a shotgun, a rifle or a carbine.

#### HEY... YOU!

*Why don't you go and read the four main safety rules again because... yes, they are important!*

Women throughout history have been willing to suffer for the sake of fashion, from the days of corsets to high heeled shoes. But most women will not adopt the proper dress to accommodate the concealed handgun. Baggy shirts and loose fitting pants may not be flattering but are much more practical. You will find it much more functional because not only will it conceal something that will save your life, but it will also make you appear less conspicuous. This will keep you from drawing unwanted attention to yourself.

The characteristics of self

defense are reactive and not offensive. Since you do not have the advantage of deciding when or where these situations may arise, you must always be ready to react instantly. This means being prepared. Carrying a gun with an empty chamber is not preparedness. It is having a false sense of security or safety. This practice is naive and unsafe. The gun is not a magical talisman. The gun, alone, will not ward off an attack. It must be ready, and you must be ready and willing to use it.

*When you think you're ready to carry a gun, ask yourself a few questions first;*

1. Do you always follow all of the safety rules and handle all guns safely?
2. At the range, can you consistently make a group on your target the size of your hand at 5 yards? 10 yards? 15 yards?
3. Are you confident that you can actually use your gun to defend yourself or someone you care about?
4. Are you always alert and aware of your surroundings?

#### Jacksonville ABC Barricada Contributor

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# The Revolutionary Politics of Self Defense

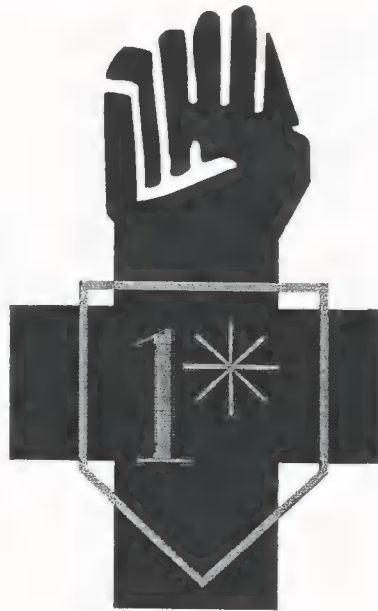
The following excerpt is from "The Revolutionary Politics of Self Defense." A book soon to be published by the Jacksonville ABCF

Right wing militia and other racist organizations are growing more and more proficient in the knowledge and use of tactical combat techniques, while the modern revolutionary movements remain defenseless. The hypothetical question needs to be raised that if a conflict broke out next week, would we be ready to defend ourselves? One thing is certain, those right wing racist organizations who are presently offering tactical training classes legally throughout America would be a great many steps ahead of us all.

The reality of the situation is that tactical combat and self defense training is not something that can be mastered in a week or even a year. Our training needs to be considered to the point where the drills become as neuromuscular reactions (or hence, that we are able to use technique without even thinking about it). This is when proficiency beings and it can take a great period of time to even reach this point. The pint is that these right wing militia and other racist organizations have been in serious training for a long time while many of us still see the concept as being premature.

Another point is that there is a definite and obvious relationship that exists between firearms and revolution. As George Jackson put it, *"Our history teaches us that the successful liberation struggle requires an armed people, a whole, actively participating in the struggle for their liberty!"* The fact that there has never been a successful revolution without at least some show of force makes, for the serious revolutionary, firearms training a definite and living reality.

Firearms training in present day revolutionary movements has often been perceived as being premature or as an invitation for police repression. Examples are often sighted of MOVE and the Black Panther Party. The focus of these organizations was to make a political statement by a show of arms. Patrolling neighborhoods and acting as a revolutionary police force differs greatly from carrying concealed weapons for personal protection. Not to criticize these organizations for their actions, for under the right political climate they



could serve a valuable purpose; however this is not what is meant by our advocacy of self defense.

Private ownership of firearms in America for anything but hunting or sport (even throughout many revolutionary circles) has been stigmatized and made to appear illegitimate and illegal. The reality is that in every state it is legal to own and use a firearm lethally in defense of a life. For obvious reasons this has been portrayed as something that is socially unacceptable and illegal. For that and many other reasons people have become almost completely dependant on government agencies for protection. This is no accident, for as crime and violence are being exploited

throughout the media, we have let the government step in. They have been more than happy to provide us with their solutions because a dependent, defenseless people is an enslaved people.

Crime is the number one fear in America today. It's growth and hype is being consistently trumped up by the news media in an effective effort to gratify the fears of the general population. This fear has pervaded the lifestyles of all social classes and like clockwork has resulted in the call for more police on the streets. The anarchist and other revolutionary arguments towards the abolition of police and prison ahs only served to confirm the possibility of the majority of Americans worst nightmares because the police and prison systems have been presented as their only alternative to crime.

Personal protection and tactical self defense training as viable alternatives to crime should be taught within the community on all levels. firearms training is only one aspect of the whole. People need to understand the concepts of armed and unarmed defense, rape prevention, securing a home, as well as dealing with the legal system. People need to know when to use the appropriate level of force, the characteristics of a stress situation, dealing with the aftermath and so on.

A moral and social standard should be set in which the how's and when's of self defense are understood throughout the community. the act itself, of teaching self defense within the community should be looked at as a revolutionary means of empowerment. Through self defense, people will be given their own means of self determination as well as a way to stand up and fight back. This in turn weakens our dependence on government agencies for protection and brings us one step closer to the realizations of our dreams.

Two training videos are currently available from the Jacksonville ABCF. They are "Urban Rifle" and "Shotgun Tactics for Self-Defense." They are available for 15\$ each or 25\$ for both from the Jacksonville ABCF.





when it is practical.

It seems clear then that violence is a tactical necessity in a revolutionary situation, however, the psychological effects of carrying out violent acts of resistance must be analyzed as well. The psychological trauma of oppression runs incredibly deep, expressing itself most often in a form of depression or self-loathing. In the timeless words of Frantz Fanon, "at the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect." It is through successful militant and violent struggle that the oppressed are empowered, realizing that we can in fact do something, that although we are disenfranchised, we are not powerless. Fanon also argued that "when the people have taken

violent part in the national liberation they will allow no one to set themselves up as 'liberators'." That is to say, after engaging in a violent fight for freedom, no individual will allow themselves to be placed under the yoke of a self-proclaimed "liberator" or "leader."

None of this is to say that violence carried out against oppressors by revolutionaries is always liberating, nor is it a claim that violence should be the focal point of our work as revolutionaries. The primary goal of a revolutionary organization must be to create wide-spread revolutionary class consciousness, to win broad-based working class support for revolutionary ideals, and create a mass culture of resistance. If these goals are not achieved prior to a concerted and programmatic campaign of armed struggle against Capital and the State, then the revolutionaries are in grave danger of becoming vanguardist,

thereby compromising the revolution. For, "violence becomes oppressive and reactionary rather than revolutionary when it is separated from the revolutionary masses and concentrated into the hands of a cadre of the advance guard (Masamichi Osawa, 1969)." However, it is equally important to remember at all times, that the revolution is not a unachievable event but a real possibility for which we must strive, that class struggle is not some abstract myth but a very real and material fight for liberation. Therefore, as we strive to build class consciousness and working class resistance it is paramount that we understand the inevitability of violent struggle and not shy away from the use of arms when the time comes for them to be used.

**Beggar  
Barricada Collective**

## CHINA BEFORE ENTERING THE WTO: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

coast in the big cities. The government has also tried to spur domestic (urban) consumer spending, giving urban workers two weeks of extra holidays to spend money and lowering the interest rate and raising the taxes on savings accounts. But the famous untapped consumer market of China isn't what it is purported to be. There is very little consumer spending in the countryside where the majority of Chinese live, and urban spending has been much less than hoped for.

Another milestone in China's move to become fully part of global capitalism will be its entry into the WTO (probably in the Fall). Yet this will only compound the rural problems, as membership in the WTO will particularly hurt the rural population. China's agricultural goods aren't competitive on the world market. With WTO entry, cheaper agricultural goods will enter China's cities from abroad, and rural incomes, which are already stagnating, will probably drop. The state is making a lot of noise about increasing rural investment, but such investment is much more difficult than urban investment due, in part, to the small scale of farming in China.

Meanwhile, Chinese society

is becoming much less stable. There are now thousands of protests a year in China. Most of these are by workers who haven't been paid or have been laid off. A year ago, the largest of these protests took place in a northeastern mining town. The mine was closed, putting the whole town out of work. This caused three days of riots, which included the burning of police cars and were only put down by the army. Rural riots have also taken place, many over water rights in the increasingly drought prone north. Farmers have even attacked gated communities on the edge of Beijing that had taken their land. Yet these outbursts haven't been able to build into any sort of movement. The Chinese government doesn't allow any autonomous organization. Nor does it allow independent publications to exist. When China recently signed UN covenants on human and social rights, it specifically excluded the sections that allowed for autonomous unions and free association. It is such organization that the Chinese government is most afraid of.

Under such circumstances, the Party has had to recreate its image and build a new ideological

foundation. According to a new formulation by Party Chairman Jiang Zemin, the Party should first represent "the development needs of the most advanced forces of production." The Party is now more open about the fact that it has more in common with the budding capitalist class in China than with the workers. Both the government and many of the new capitalists see democracy as a chaotic force in China. The fostering of nationalism has also helped keep the Party in firm control. This is the prime reason for China's spending so much to get picked as the site for the 2008 Olympic Games.

Many questions remain: Will the Chinese state be able to contain the discontent that is generated by the insertion of Chinese society into the global capitalist regime of value? Will such discontent find effective means of organization and action? And, how can we act in solidarity with such struggles?

**Sasha  
KK Abacus**





# POLITICAL PRISONERS

## FREEDOM FOR GERMINAL, FREEDOM FOR JAGGI SINGH

Six people are still being held at in Quebec's Orsainville prison as a result of the anti-capitalist mobilization against the Summit of the Americas and the FTAA.

All of them have been denied the possibility of being released on bail pending their trials because the judges deem them "a danger to society."

The first five of the activist's still in prison are members of the Germinal affinity group from Montreal who were arrested on Wednesday, April 18 as they were headed to Quebec City. According to police reports, when they were stopped they were driving with a trunk full of chains, flares, hockey equipment, a baseball bat, "flash" simulation grenades, smoke bombs, helmets, and other equipment. The charges against the group are "conspiracy to commit mischief" and one member, who is in a Canadian army reservist, is additionally being charged with stealing material from the military.

The other activist being held without bail is prominent CLAC organizer Jaggi Singh.

Singh was grabbed by undercover cops dressed as activists in the "green" zone on Rue St. Jean on Friday afternoon.

The policemen, who jumped out of an unmarked white van, did not identify themselves as police until pulling out batons to prevent other activists from performing an unarrest.

The charges against Singh include "inciting a riot" and violation of the conditions of his parole.

In addition, Singh is also being



Police and security forces disguised as protestors brutally arrest Jaggi Singh on Friday

charged with possession of a dangerous weapon.

Police claim that Singh was in possession of a catapult that was used to

launch molotov cocktails at riot police on Rene-Levesque. The fact is, not only was Singh in no way connected to the catapult, but it was never used to launch anything other than stuffed animals.

Since his arrest Singh has repeatedly been subject to racist jokes and comments from prison authorities and was denied vegetarian meals for the first four days of his detention.

It is clear that this is nothing more than the Canadian state's attempts to scapegoat somebody for the massive mobilization in Quebec City. Singh, as the "dangerous dark activist," and the members of Germinal, as the "dangerous violent activists," are purely political prisoners and deserve our total support. Furthermore, there will most certainly be many fines to be paid by the more than 400 people arrested during the Summit weekend. Needless to say, economic contributions are very much needed. To make a donation...

Quebec Legal Defence  
1615 Bernard  
Outremont, Quebec  
H2V 1X2

The Barricada Collective

## THE DIRTY TRICKS OF THE STATE: A QUEBEC ARRESTEE'S ACCOUNT

I was arrested during the late-night of Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup> in Quebec City. After being charged with two summary offenses (slightly less serious than a misdemeanor in the U.S.), myself and the two comrades I was arrested with sat in jail for five days, impatiently waiting for our bail hearing the following Wednesday. On Tuesday, all three of us were called down to the video courtroom which had been set up for the arraignments and bail hearings of arrested protestors. We had apparently been rescheduled for a bail hearing that day, however, the prosecutor argued that he had wanted the "chief investigator" of our case to be present at the hearing, and therefore

requested that the bail hearing be pushed back to its original date and time. This was the first sign we had that something more was going on, and put us all in a very tense state of alert.

The following day we were once again brought before the video court, and to our overjoyed amazement, were given a bail of 500 Canadian dollars each. We posted bail within just a few minutes, and later that afternoon I was called for release... alone. After making my way through the bureaucracy of the prison, finally getting most of my possessions back, etc. I exited from the prison building into the main entrance courtyard, separated

from the outside by two sets of gates. I made my way through the first set of gates, and realized there were two assholes in suits waiting there. They immediately approached me and informed me that they were with the Quebec Provincial Police, and were there to inform me that I was under arrest for the attempted murder of a St. Foye police officer. Needless to say, I had absolutely no part in the incident which they were accusing me of, however, no words can describe the instant psychological deterioration I felt, having been so close to relative freedom, only to be arrested on this direly serious charge.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



BARRICADA #7, MAY 2001



# CLASS WAR IN VIRGINIA

## NO PEACE FOR CAPITALISTS, ANYWHERE!

Calling all anti-authoritarians, anti-capitalists and all others who seek a world free of charge! The Virginia Republican Convention (VARC) will take place in Richmond from June 1-2. Thousands of delegates from across the state will converge to continue the war waged upon us by the ruling class which controls them.

The farcical notion of electoral democracy must be replaced. Our Earth, our livelihoods, our land, and our liberty can only be defended by those who stand to lose the most from their destruction. The VARC will seek to elevate the narrow interests of the ruling class over the universal concerns which affect us all.

Rise up! This will be a time to refute their claims to privilege and power. We call on all blockaders, guerrilla gardeners, saboteurs, drummers, Radical Cheerleaders, street performers, action medics, bike messengers, radio operators, and all other concerned individuals to converge in Richmond for a 3-day Festival of Resistance against state authority and oppression. Policies that wage war on the people of Virginia and the world will be directly challenged. Come to Richmond from May 31-June 2. Let's take it to the streets!

Bread and Revolution

For more information: Bread and Revolution. [breadandrevolution-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:breadandrevolution-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)  
(703) 234-3953 x4592

## NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE, FUCK THE POLICE

The police officers then cuffed me and put me in the back of a new Lincoln town car, and forced me to put my head down on the seat, so that the folks camped in front of the prison would not be able to see that I was in the car. They drove me to the RCMP headquarters outside of Quebec. I immediately informed them that I wanted to speak to my lawyer, and after some resistance from them, I was able to both speak on the phone with one lawyer from the legal team, and meet in person with another.

As with most other people, I have long known that when questioned by police, it is best to remain silent, however, I never knew exactly what that meant. Fortunately, the lawyers were able to explain this to me, very simply, stating "Answer no questions. They will ask you what your favorite restaurant is, what color your socks are... don't answer any of these questions, no matter how simple or harmless they seem." And so that is exactly what I did. For approximately thirteen hours the two same cops went at me, asking just about everything you could imagine, and trying all sorts of tricks to get me to talk, and the most they heard cross my lips was "yes, I understand your English, and I choose to remain silent." After the interroga-

tion they finally let me sleep for a few hours, and when I awoke, they released me, free from any new charges.

Among the tricks they tried in order to start me talking: the obvious good cop, bad cop game; forcing me into a lineup after I had refused to participate, then telling me that the victim had identified me as one of the people who attacked him; asking me mundane questions about food, school, life, etc.; telling me that if I told them everything then they would only charge me with assault instead of attempted murder; calling my family's house at 4 am and telling them I was under arrest; telling me I also had other charges against me, including a "sexual assault" charge. This last one came the closest to making me talk, as I wanted to scream at them "how dare you accuse me of that! You disgusting bastards!" They later informed me that "the sexual assault charge was not real, we only told you that to see your reaction... but I'm sure you understand." Understand?? I don't think so.

But perhaps much more important than all the games they played with my head, is the fact that they continually asked me about "my group." It is my belief

that this was the real reason for the interrogation: to weasel me for more information on any collective or organization I'm part of. This is incredibly important for any organized revolutionary to know, because I'm sure I will not be the last person who undergoes this experience. Therefore, if there is one lesson to take from my ordeal it is this: know that the right to remain silent is very broad, and that you should never answer any questions the police ask of you, other than your name and address (unless you are participating in jail solidarity). If you are really going to be charged with something, they will have to present their evidence in court, and you will be able to fight the charges then and there, there is no need to try to explain yourself or your actions to the police prior to that- it will only hurt you. And lastly, remember that there is a good chance the interrogation has nothing to do with any actual crime, but more with getting information from you on who you work with, how organized you are, etc.

An Anonymous Boston Activist



**BARRICADE #7, MAY 2001**





REFSISTANCE!

against the violence of capitalism and the state.